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ABSTRACT

To help Pennsylvania-based reading professionals share the results of their research with colleagues, this guide contains abstracts of both published and unpublished articles, doctoral dissertations, masters' projects, institutional research projects, and articles in preparation, all prepared by researchers living in Pennsylvania or affiliated with educational institutions in that state. Topics covered in the abstracts include the following: (1) content area reading, (2) implementation of the Pennsylvania Reading Plan in six Title I centers, (3) assessing the ability of primary grade students to use phonics in reading, (4) preschool literary socialization, (5) reading comprehension instruction and content instruction in fourth grade social studies, (6) a successful innercity classroom, (7) implementation of an innovative reading language arts program in an urban elementary school, (8) student attitude and achievement in reading as a function of teacher staff development, (9) learning disabilities and reading disabilities, (10) the effect of imagery on comprehension and retention of a prose reading passage, (11) promoting and helping with senior citizen reading, (12) story knowledge in preschoolers, (13) college reading, (14) readability levels of college freshman texts, and (15) twelfth grade students' comprehension styles. (FL)

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PENNSYLVANIA READING RESEARCH DIRECTORY

Craig J. Cleland, Editor

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PREFACE

In response to a charge from the Executive Committee of the Keystone State Reading Association (KSRA), the Research Committee of KSRA undertook to compile a directory of recent reading research conducted in Pennsylvania.*

In the fall of 1983, questionaires were sent to colleges and universities in Pennsylvania which offered graduate degrees in the area of reading. Additionally, questionaires were to sent to the research directors of several of the largest school districts in the State. Respondents were asked to provide abstracts of published and nonpublished reading research completed in the previous three years. The abstracts were edited for length and form and arranged alphabetically.

Abstracts contained in the directory include published and nonpublished articles, doctoral dissertations, master's projects, institutional research studies, and articles in preparation. In order to aid the reader in finding out more about the studies represented in this volume, abstracts of published studies (see Askov and Dupuis, 1983) are preceded by a bibliographic citation. All other entries (see Braverman, 1982) include the researcher's name, the title of the study, the form of the research, the institutional affiliation, and the year in which the research was completed. This information

is followed by a notation regarding the age or grade level of the group being investigated. The following designations were used to categorize groups: preschool; primary, grades K-2; intermediate, grades 3-5; middle school, grades 6-8; high school, grades 9-12; college; and adult.

While is is recognized that the research studies abstracted herein represent but a fraction of the investigations in reading conducted within this rich and diverse state, it is hoped that this directory will better assist reading professionals in sharing the results of their research efforts with their colleagues.

*Note: All of the researchers included in this directory are either residents of Pennsylvania or are affiliated with a Pennsylvania educational institution.

Askov, E.N., & Dupuis, M.M. "Results of a Three-Year Study of Teacher Change Through Inservice in Content Area Reading." In G. McNinch (ed.), Yearbook of the American Reading Forum, 1983.

intermediate, middle school, high school

The Content Area Reading Program (CARP) has been operating since 1978 through a network of instructors throughout Pennsylvania. The effectiveness of CARP in changing teachers' (grades 4-10) knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to content area reading was evaluated in a three-year project in Hollidaysburg under IV-C funding.

The CARP inservice training produced positive effects when experimental teachers were compared to teachers in the same school district with no CARP training. Greater gains were achieved by those teachers who volunteered for the training and whose training group included a variety of content areas and grade levels.

Further information on CARP inservice training and the evaluation instruments is available from the authors.

Braverman, C.W. "The Change Process in the Implementation of the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading Plan in Six Title I Centers - A Case Study," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

primary, intermediate

This study examined the implementation of the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading Plan (PCRP) in Title I pull-out centers in six elementary schools in an urban district. The PCRP is an integrated approach to reading/language arts which differed from the approaches formerly being used in the school district.

The project was studied during the first and part of the second year of the implementation. Data was collected through participant observation, analyses of documents, and interviews with key personnel. As an analytic heuristic, the notion of mutual adaptation was brought to the analysis. Mutual adaptation, Berman and McLaughlin (1975), implies that innovations are not accepted wholly by users, but rather, are adapted to the user and the innovation. Classroom change was reported during the course of the study. Variables affecting mutual adaptation included the nature of the new activities, the complexity of the innovation, the novelty of the activities, and the internal structure of the school and the external society.

Carlburg, J.J.C. "An Assessment of the Ability of Primary Grade Pupils to Utilize Phonics in Reading Situations," Doctoral Dissertation in Progress, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1984.

primary

The purpose of this study is to assess the facility of primary grade pupils in utilizing phonics in practical reading situations with words not previously known. The participants will be middle-class second graders from various geographical locations in the United States. They will be asked to respond to the vocabulary and comprehension subtests of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test, Primary B, as a measure of reading achievement. Another assessment tool will be constructed which reflects basic phonic generalizations appropriate for primary grades. Nonsense words will be used to assure that all words are unknown to the subjects. Words will be presented in isolation and in a contextual setting. Oral responses will be analyzed for phonic accuracy and viewed as a demonstration of phonic skill in decoding unknown words.

Cochran-Smith, M. "The Making of a Reader: A Case Study of Preschool Literacy Socialization," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

preschool

The purpose of the study was to provide a descriptive analysis of the specific features of the literary orientation of a group of children attending a private, middle-class nursery school in Philadelphia. The research strategy combined longitudinal participant-observation with informal and formal interviews of teacher and parents. Adult-child storyreading emerged as the key nursery school literacy event; hence the primary data base was a corpus of 100 annotated storyreading transcriptions. Storyreadings and literacy events in the nursery school at large were analyzed according to their structure of interactional and interpretive norms. Three major types of adult-child verbal interactions around storyreading were identified: (I) "readiness" interactions that established or maintained a physical or psychological bookreading frame, (II) "life-to-text" interactions that helped storylisteners use their knowledge of the world in order to make sense of texts, and (III) "text-to-life" interactions that helped story listeners use textual knowledge to make sense of their lives.

Coyne, M. "An Investigation of Reading Comprehension Instruction and Content Instruction in Fourth Grade Social Studies," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1981.

intermediate

This study documented methods and materials being used to teach fourth grade social studies in one school district. Delivery systems for content instruction and reading comprehension instruction were examined. In addition, participating teachers were interviewed to determine their attitudes toward reading in the content areas.

The data was analyzed quantitatively (time and frequency) and qualitatively for activities, materials, and grouping patterns. Although no comprehension instruction took place, teachers provided content instruction, predominantly through the use of a whole class reading one text. The methodology employed, the social studies text itself, and methods of initial and ongoing teacher education were discussed as influences on the results.

Dabney, N. "See How It Runs: A Successful Innercity Classroom," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1983.

primary

In an attempt to identify models of successful teaching practices, this study provides an ethnographic description of one innercity classroom in which the teacher has been consistently successful in teaching reading and writing to low-socio-economic-status-Black students.

Mildred Gray, the fictitious name for the teacher who is the focus of this study, has not only consistently helped low-SES-Black students to become competent readers, but has also assisted them in writing as well as the average student in Grosse Pointe, Michigan--one of the most affluent communities in the country.

Over a period of two years, her classroom was studied in the context of the school and the school system of which it is a part. An in-depth, narrative description is given of a day in her classroom, and this is viewed in the context of how the school year began and ended. Conclusions are drawn and relevant research is cited that supports and conflicts with these findings.

Dickinson, C.C. "Reading Comprehensive Instruction in Two Different Reading Curricula as Revealed by the Interactive Language of Teachers and Students that Constitutes the Oral Responses to Literature," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

intermediate

This study presented a semantic analysis of the interactive classroom language of fourth grade students and teachers in two different reading instructional configurations -- the traditional basal reading curriculum and another basal curriculum that had been modified by the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading Plan (PCRP). The language that was examined occurred during the segment of the lesson when students orally responded to literature that they had just read.

The research design was eclectic; a case-study approach combined elements of a quasi-experimental design with ethnographic research techniques. Results revealed a wider range of language use, greater language complexity, and longer mean utterance lengths employed among PRCP students as opposed to traditional basal students.

Dolan, J.C. "The Implementation of an Innovative Reading Language Arts Program in an Urban Elementary School," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

primary, intermediate

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to describe and analyze the process of implementing an innovative reading/language arts program in an urban elementary school. The program involved children's responses to literature, involvement in oral and written composition and self-selected reading, as well as investigating language patterns.

This study focused primarily on the role of the principal as a change agent in a school which had a high degree of internal professionalism and a low degree of community involvement. An emphasis was placed upon the principal's role as a buffer or mediator during the implementation. A description of the effect this had upon the change process was detailed. The reactions of the staff and a description of their participation was given. A secondary focus of the study was an assessment of the affect on student achievement of the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading Plan (PCRP).

Dupkuis, M.M., and Askov, E.N. "Student Attitude and Achievement in Reading as a Function of Teacher Staff Development," Article in Preparation, The Pennsylvania State University, 1983.

intermediate, middle school

A three-year study assessed the impact of a three-year inservice program on student attitude and achievement at three grade levels. Students were followed in grades 4, 6, and 8 for three years, a total of 900. Students were assessed by the California Achievement Test for reading achievement and the Estes Reading Attitude scales. Basic IQ scores, on the California Test, were also included. The results are being analyzed by grade and sex; in addition, student data is being analyzed in terms of how many teachers who received inservice training through the Content Area Reading program have taught a given student. Results will be available later this year.

Elliott, J.B. "A Scale for Assessing Attitudes of College Students Toward Reading," Article in Preparation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1983.

college

The purpose of this study was to desigr a reliable and valid instrument to measure the attitudes of college students toward reading. In addition, the results would enable the researcher to recommend uses for the scale.

The Likert summated rating technique was chosen for the data analysis because its use was supported in the literature and its design permits students to express degrees of feeling concerning the behaviors reflected in the items sampled.

There were 200 sophomore through senior elementary education majors enrolled at Indiana University of pennsylvania and The Pennsylvania State University who responded to a 26 item attitude scale. Statements selected for the final scale had an item-total correlation of .30 or higher. Any items of lower correlation were dropped from the original scale of 50 items. Suggested uses for the scale are given in the final report.

Foreman, S. "Reading-Study System and Study Management Training in College Academic Skills Instruction." Doctoral Dissertation, Millersville University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

college

This study was designed to compare the effects on college students' reading achievement, vocabulary development, study habits, and study attitudes of (1) reading-study system practice supported by study management training, (2) reading-study system practice without study management training, and (3) conventional college reading-study practice without study management training when these procedures were introduced in remedial English skills classes.

Experimental conditions were randomly assigned to three intact classes in basic writing (N=74), at a state college in Pennsylvania. Tests used included the Brown-Holtzman Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes, the McGraw-Hill Reading Test, and the vocabulary section of the Nelson-Denny Reading Test.

A one-way analysis of covariance was used to determine post-test mean score differences, adjusted for pre-treatment scores. Findings for all four dependent variables were not statistically significant. Conclusions were that use of this reading-study system was not more effective than conventional procedures and that study management training was not comparatively more effective in accelerating growth among remedial English groups.

Fullerton, S.K. "Linking Process and Product Measures of Comprehension: A Study of Third Graders' Stylistic Differences in Comprehending Text," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1983.

intermediate

This study examined individual differences in comprehension style using first, a product measure, sentence verification tests, and then, a process measure, oral protocol analysis. The 82, third-grade participants represented a range of reading abilities.

The study was conducted in two phases. In the first part, all students read and responded to ten, unaltered text passages through a sentence verification technique (SVT). The product measures of comprehension style, obtained through the SVT test questions were correlated to other outcome and pupil variables, including age, I.Q., standardized reading test scores, and word recognition assessments. In the second phase of the study, in-process reading comprehension styles of eight selected students were examined as they generated thinking-aloud protocols with four difficult narratives.

The study lends support to the notion that an accurate and complete description of reading comprehension style requires information from both product and process perspectives.

Gilmore, P. "'Gimme Room': A Cultural Approach to the Study of Attitudes and Admission to Literacy," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1983.

primary, intermediate

This study examined school and community perceived problems concerning literacy achievement. The study was conducted in a predominately low-income, Black, urban elementary school. The data consisted of personal observations, interactions, and interviews documented over a three year period.

Within the school, admission to a special accelerated academic program was viewed as being dependent, to a great degree, on a student's perceived "attitude." Yet, when the behaviors subsumed under the label "attitude" were examined, the data indicated that the behaviors consisted largely of a set of linguistic, paralinguistic, and kinetic adornments which were associated with a particular ethnic style and socio-economic class, rather than a set of character traits reflective of the nature of individuals. The study examined specific language and social behaviors which were associated with assessments of "attitude." Issues of peer culture, teaching and learning in literacy were considered with respect to alignment, ownership, and personalization.

Gumpert, M. "Learning Disabilities and Reading Disabilities: A Survey of Pennsylvania's Intermediate Units," Master's Project, Kutztown University, 1981.

primary, intermediate, middle school, high school

A comparative study of Pennsylvania's Intermediate Units was conducted to examine differences in definitions, diagnostic techniques, and methods of remediation related to learning and reading disabled students. Surveys were sent to a random sample of 15 of the 29 Intermediate Units. Twelve responded, and the following conclusions were drawn. Similarities among the respondents were noted in the areas of referral, diagnostic procedures, remedial services, and professional personnel. Discrepancies were seen in the responses addressing guidelines for defining learning and reading disabilities. Only a small majority of the twelve responding Intermediate Units follow Pennsylvania's guidelines for defining the learning and reading disabled child.

Herbine, B. "A Study of the Effect of Imagery on Comprehension and Retention of a Prose Reading Passage," Master's Project, Kutztown University, 1983.

intermediate

The hypothesis that the absence of illustrations improves comprehension and retention of prose material was tested. A comparison was made of the reading comprehension test results of two groups of fourth graders who were reading above grade level. One group read a grade level passage with illustrations and the other group read the same passage without illustrations. A factorial design was employed using an analysis of variance. No significant relationship was found between comprehension and illustrations utilization.

Hoffman, S.J. "Preschool Reading Related Behaviors: A Parent Diary," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

preschool

The purpose of the study was to describe the development of reading related behaviors in the researcher's child over a two year period, ages 2:6 to 4:6. The detailed description of the developmental process was based on a parent diary, audio records, and artifacts (print samples, drawings, dictated stories). The data was organized around three categories of behaviors: (1) "reading-wise"; (2) "book-reading"; and (3) "early reading-print."

The child's development of literacy skills did not follow a neat sequential ladder of one skill followed by a more complex skill and so on. Rather, his behaviors spiraled constantly developing and expanding through recursive issues of literacy.

The child had his own timetable for learning which the parent-researcher encouraged to be largely self-initiated, self-paced, self-structured, and frequently self-terminated. Literacy acquisition penetrated every phase of the child's life and social interactions.

Johnson G.S. "Promoting and Helping With the Reading of Our Senior Citizens," Nonpublished Article, West Snyder High School, 1983.

adult

This presentation item is a report of some recent as well as some ongoing research (interview and questionnaire surveys) relative to the reading habits and skills of senior citizens in several types of groups or settings (residence centers, nursing homes, public libraries, senior citizen clubs). The findings, at present, deal with a number of areas, including extent and type of reading done and enjoyed, reading preferences and dislikes, reasons for reading or not reading, and perceived lacks and needs. A number of suggestions and implications for teachers and others interested in promoting and helping with the reading of senior citizens has resulted.

Kelley, L.L. "A Combined Experimental and Descriptive Study of the Effect of Music on Reading and Language," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1981

primary

An exploratory study to investigate the effect of Orff-Schulwerk music on reading/language arts performance in the first grade was carried out combining both experimental and descriptive approaches. Three experimental groups were randomly assigned to music, visual arts and control. Following premeasures, the music and art groups each met three times a week for a period of 30 minutes from December to May.

Descriptive and qualitative results showed that the music group, although beginning at a statistically significant lower level, improved to equal performance with the other groups in reading and related areas. Qualitative analysis revealed the role of self concept, attention and coordinating modalities.

It was concluded that music showed a demonstrated potential for enhancing reading and language in the first grade. The combined methodologies were essential to revealing the phenomenon. A model of operational relationships between music and reading was developed from empirical and theoretical analyses.

Knopf, J.R. "The Implementation of an Innovative Reading/Language Arts Program in an Urban Elementary School," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1981.

primary, intermediate

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the process of implementation of an innovative reading/language arts program in an urban elementary school. The study concentrated on the role of staff training under the leadership of the building principal in the implementation of the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading Plan (PCRP). Aspects of staff training that promoted or hindered the implementation process were examined. A major objective was to determine the extent of staff knowledge of the PCRP and their participation in its implementation. A limited assessment of the impact of the PCRP on student achievement was also undertaken.

The study of the implementation employed an ethnographic approach with the principal as participant observer. A critical aspect of this type of data collection was the flexibility built into the process. Data gathering techniques were changed and developed during the study. This aided the researcher in uncovering new data to develop, clarify or refine hypotheses.

Kontos, S. "Development and Interrelationships of Reading Knowledge and Skills During Kindergarten," Conference Presentation, The Pennsylvania State University. 1983.

primary

The purpose of the study was no longitudinally observe the acquisition of reading knowledge and skill during kindergarten using multiple measures of each. A measure of writing was also included. The sample consisted of 64 kindergarten children, all of whom began the study as non-readers. Observations were conducted in the fall, winter and spring. A multiple regression analysis revealed that reading readiness in the spring was predicted by fall performance on prereading skills but not by fall print awareness scores. A cross-lag correlation revealed that fall scores on two prereading skills predicted spring print awareness scores ($r = .581$) much better than fall print awareness scores predicted spring performance on the two prereading skills ($r = .165$). Results of both analyses supported the hypothesis that knowledge about print develops as a result of increased reading skill and that print awareness is not a prerequisite to reading achievement.

Kontos, S. "Story Knowledge in Preschoolers: A Comprehensive View," Conference Presentation, The Pennsylvania State University, 1983.

primary

The purpose of the study was to investigate what preschool children know about the structure and composition of a story as a literary experience as distinguished from oral discourse for conversational purposes. More specifically, the objective was to gain a comprehensive perspective by analyzing the same set of stories told by preschool children in terms of variables typically observed separately by different investigators. Subjects consisted of 33 three-, four-, and five-year olds who were asked to retell a familiar story, The Three Little Pigs. Transcripts of the resulting stories were analyzed in terms of: 1) the presence of well-formed story categories; 2) structural complexity, 3) use of formal story characteristics, and 4) construction of a narrative text. Results revealed that age was a poor predictor of any variable except reliance on general prompts from adults. Verbal ability was a more potent predictor of performance than age. The data suggest that knowledge of story content precedes knowledge of structure and that experiential factors (e.g., use of thematic-fantasy play) play a large role in the development of children's story knowledge.

Lenk, D.C. "Tommy and Jose': Ethnographic Case Studies of Two Boys Labeled Learning Disabled and their Interaction With Reading/Language Arts," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

intermediate, middle school

The purpose of this research was to analyze data gathered on two boys labeled learning disabled, to discover how they made sense of their world and the world of reading/language arts. Subjects were two boys aged ten and twelve. The setting was an elementary LD classroom which used the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading Plan. Data was collected at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year, altogether sixteen weeks. Ethnographic methods used were participant observation and key informant interviews

Tentative conclusions drawn from the data included: 1) the match of teaching and styles of learning is critical; 2) Spanish speaking children need bilingual reading skills; 3) children can collaborate in research; 4) informal assessment techniques have distinct advantages for test-weary LD labelled children; and 5) education and research cannot be separated.

Lytle, S.L. "Exploring Comprehension Style: A Study of Twelfth Graders' Transactions With Texts," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

high school

This study examined the in-process comprehension of twenty-one twelfth graders as they constructed the meanings of three transactional (non-fiction) texts. It addressed three salient questions: (1) How can thinking-aloud protocols be used to provide insights into ongoing comprehension processes? (2) How do individuals differ in their styles of reading and especially in their responses to comprehension and to the way reading comprehension may be taught in schools?

Students with a wide range of scores on the Verbal SAT participated in five one-to-one sessions with the researcher. They made spontaneous oral protocols involving sentence-by-sentence reading of difficult texts, talking aloud their thoughts as they read. In the last session they discussed their own reading experiences and attitudes in an informal interview.

Individual readers were found to have highly consistent reading strategies. Readers differed from one another in type of strategies, in their conceptions of the author-reader relationship, and in their perceptions of themselves as readers.

Mallery, A.L., & Townsend, B. "College Reading: Impact on Student Retention," In G. McNinch (ed.), Yearbook of the American Reading Forum, 1983.

college. .

This Study examined the success of two content area reading courses taught to college freshmen identified as deficient in basic reading skills. The success of the reading instruction was evaluated by examining students' grades in reading related courses the semester following completion of developmental reading. Results indicated that the course which used a language experience approach to improve critical thinking and communication skills achieved better results than the course using traditional teaching methods.

Mallery, A.L. "Content Reading in Biology," Institutional Research, Millersville University, 1982.

college

In the 1981 summer session, twenty-three specially admitted freshmen participated in an experimental course which fused reading and study skills with biology content. After the fall semester, transcripts of the students who completed the 100 level biology course were examined. Bio 100 course grades of the experimental population were compared with Bio 100 grades of specially admitted students who scheduled Bio 100 from Fall 1976 - Spring 1981. Students completing the experimental course earned higher grades in Bio 100 than high risk students in previous semesters.

Mallery, A.L., & Linn, J. "Readability Level of Freshman Texts," Institutional Research, Millersville University, 1983.

college

The readability levels of textbooks in entry level courses in: English, History, Psychology, Biology, Political Science, Chemistry, Speech, Sociology, Health, Economics, Business, Geography, and Earch Science courses were calculated using the Raygor Readability Estimate. The reading levels of the texts ranged from 10th grade to above professional norms. Reports were submitted to professors which included the readability level, an evaluation of the text format, and study skills guidelines for students using the book.

Mallery, A.L., & Linn, J. "Survey of Pennsylvania Universities' Developmental Reading Instruction," Institutional Research, Millersville University, 1983.

college

Ten universities in Pennsylvania were surveyed to gather information about college reading instruction. Results indicated that: Most schools have proficiency requirements, the Nelson Denny Test is used most frequently, the number of sections of reading offered per year vary from thirty-five to seven, the course is credited at most institutions, the credits count toward graduation, and three is the credit award mentioned most frequently.

Milgrim, E.L. "Students' Perceptions of Teacher Expectation and Attitudes Toward Reading in Three Classrooms, " Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

intermediate

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of teacher expectation and the teacher behaviors that convey expectation messages as perceived by students in three fifth grade classrooms; to investigate the students' attitudes toward reading in the classroom; to determine whether there was a relationship between how the students feel they are regarded by the teacher and how they feel about reading in the classroom; and to determine whether this information was useful to teachers.

Data on the students' attitudes toward reading in school and their perceptions of teacher expectations were gathered through attitude scales, student interviews, and video-tapes of reading group sessions. Findings were discussed with the teachers and the teachers evaluated the usefulness of the information for planning and implementing classroom reading programs.

Nickols, M.A. "A Case Study of Academically Reading Deficient Students' Perceptions of the Transition from an Elementary Setting to a Secondary Setting," Doctoral Dissertation, New Kensington - Arnold School District, 1983.

intermediate, middle school

The purpose of this study was to conduct a case study of academically reading deficient students' perceptions of the transition from an elementary setting to a secondary setting. Data were gleamed from four sources or instruments administered to sixteen E.S.E.A. Title I Reading students over a one year period. The findings of this study indicated that kinesthetically-oriented seventh graders have a more negative attitude toward reading than do students who are auditory - and/or visually-oriented. Other findings indicated that academically reading deficient students perceived the transition as being difficult, but some had become visually - and/or auditory-oriented, more self-motivated, and had a more positive attitude toward reading because of the support they had received in the elementary reading center.

Putnam, L. "A Descriptive Study of Two Philosophically Different Approaches to Reading Readiness, As They Were Used in Six Inner City Kindergartens," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1981.

primary

This ethnographic study examined the learning process children go through in kindergarten classrooms. Using field notes, tape recordings, and print artifacts, two site researchers described in detail the classroom learning environment and children's literacy-related responses in two kinds of curricular settings. The study population consisted of 164 children in six classrooms in five Title I eligible Philadelphia schools (Two parochial schools, three public schools). Three of the classrooms feature a curriculum designed to duplicate the kind of "literate environment" common to homes of early readers. The other three kindergarten classrooms emphasized a traditional, sub-skill oriented reading readiness program - workbook and whole group activities in visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, letter naming, and comprehension.

Rogers, E.J. "Specific Skill Instruction, Cloze, and Discussion for Remedying Low Comprehension," Doctoral Dissertation, University of pennsylvania, 1982.

college

The primary purpose of the study was to test the proposition that cloze exercises with peer and teacher-led discussion of closures and the direct teaching of comprehension skills could combine effectively to help low comprehending college students overcome their reading difficulties. A second concern was student improvement in study habits and attitudes. Eight classes of students enrolled in a developmental reading course at a Florida community college were assigned to one of four treatments. A non-equivalent control group design was employed. The researcher concluded from the results that the cloze and cloze/discussion programs were as effective a more traditional reading and study skills programs. Recommendations were made for continued experimentation with instructional cloze with low comprehenders.

Stahl, N.A. "An Analysis of Textbook - Study Systems," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1983.

middle school, high school, college

This study examined the effectiveness of textbook-study systems from a historical perspective. Two objectives guided the investigation. The first objective was to trace the growth of textbook-study systems through the development of SQ3R. Four steps were undertaken: (1) textbook-study systems were traced to the early study-skills movement and to the formulation of the scientific management theory, (2) the initial research foundation for SQ3R was organized and analyzed, (3) over 100 current systems were examined and summarized, and (4) SQ3R's structure was discussed in light of current research. The second objective was to locate and categorize the research on SQ3R and to analyze critically the investigations in each of six groups: (1) the Ohio State studies, (2) the college program studies, (3) the college level studies, (4) the component parts study, (5) the secondary/middle school studies, (6) the "new studies" and (7) the teaching studies.

Trawick, H. "Forming and Reforming a Comprehensive Reading/Communication Arts Program at the Martha Washington School, "Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

Primary, intermediate

The Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading Plan (PCRP) encompasses responding to literature, self-selected silent reading, oral and written composition, and investigating language patterns. The purpose of this study was to determine if the four critical experiences, as provided in the PCRP, when presented to children who could already read, would not only improve academic achievement, but would make reading a self-motivated interest of the children. The study utilized a descriptive approach which followed three classes through three years. Data were gathered from teacher reports, student performance records, and parent involvement in the program.

Urland, C. "An Investigation of Readability as It Relates to Selected Basal Reader Skillpacks: Studybooks," Master's Project, Kutztown University, 1982.

intermediate, middle school

The Ginn Reading Program (1982) was investigated and the readability was determined for the third through eighth grade level of the skillpacks and studybooks. The Harris-Jacobson Formula A was applied to samples randomly chosen from each fifth of the skillpack and studybook.

All of the skillpacks and studybooks included in the investigation had average readability levels that were at or lower than their grade designations. The results seem to indicate that the Ginn 1982 series could be handled with success by above-average, average, and below-average readers. It appears that publishers are becoming increasingly aware of what researchers have found concerning the factor of readability as it relates to workbook difficulty.